



DARK NIGHTS

53

DEATH
METAL

★ JUSTICE LEAGUE



WILLIAMSON
XERMANICO
FAJARDO JR.
AGES 13+
DCCOMICS.COM

ENTER THE METALVERSE!



A NEW
OVERSIZE
ONE-SHOT
SEPTEMBER

THE FUTURE OF GOTHAM CITY
STARTS HERE!

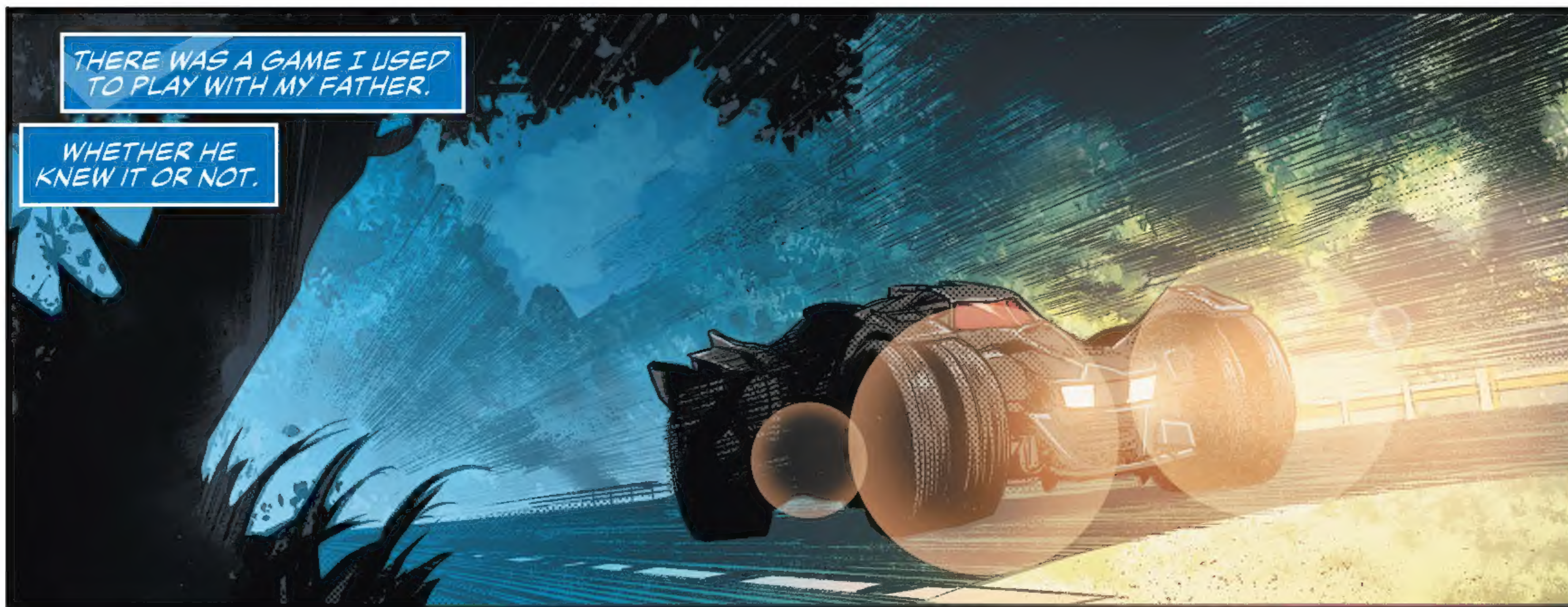
TM & © DC.

BATMAN
THE
JOKER WARZONE

Story by JAMES TYNION IV, JOHN RIDLEY, JOSHUA WILLIAMSON, and SAM JOHNS

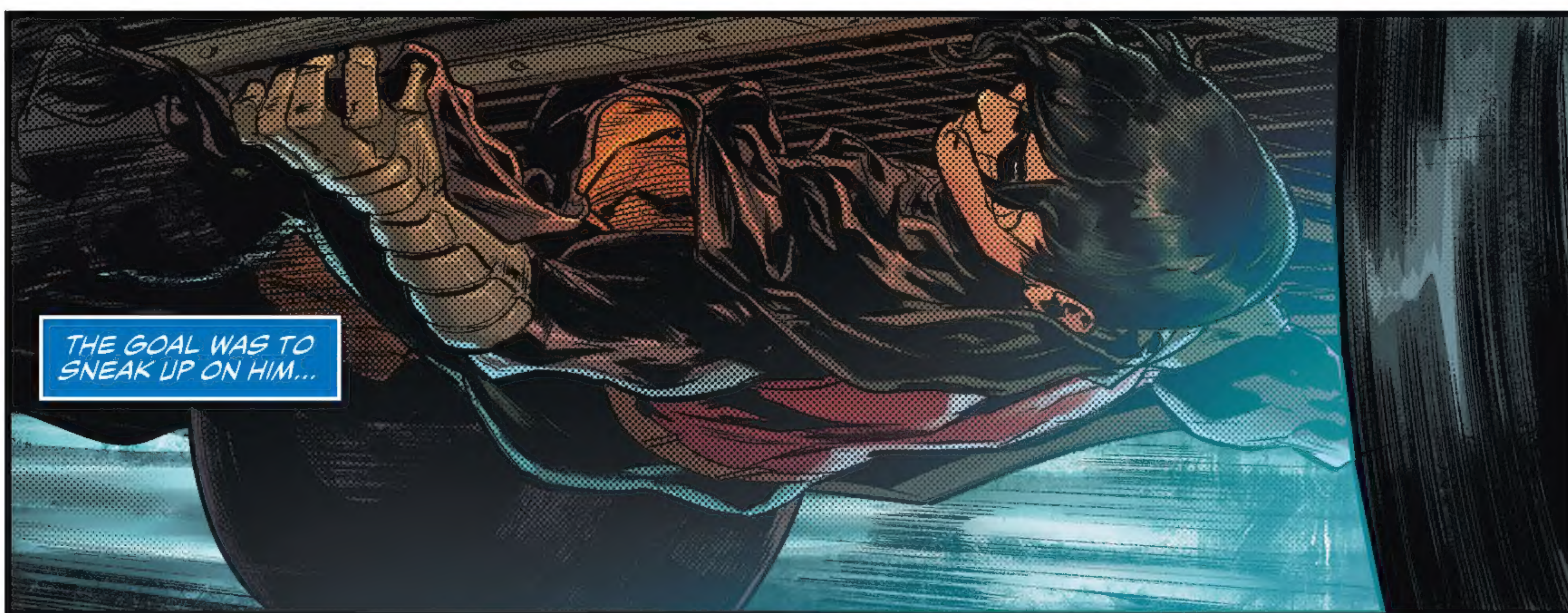
Art by GUILLEM MARCH, DAVID LAFUENTE, JAMES STOKOE, and OLIVIER COIPEL

Cover by BEN OLIVER



THERE WAS A GAME I USED
TO PLAY WITH MY FATHER.

WHETHER HE
KNEW IT OR NOT.

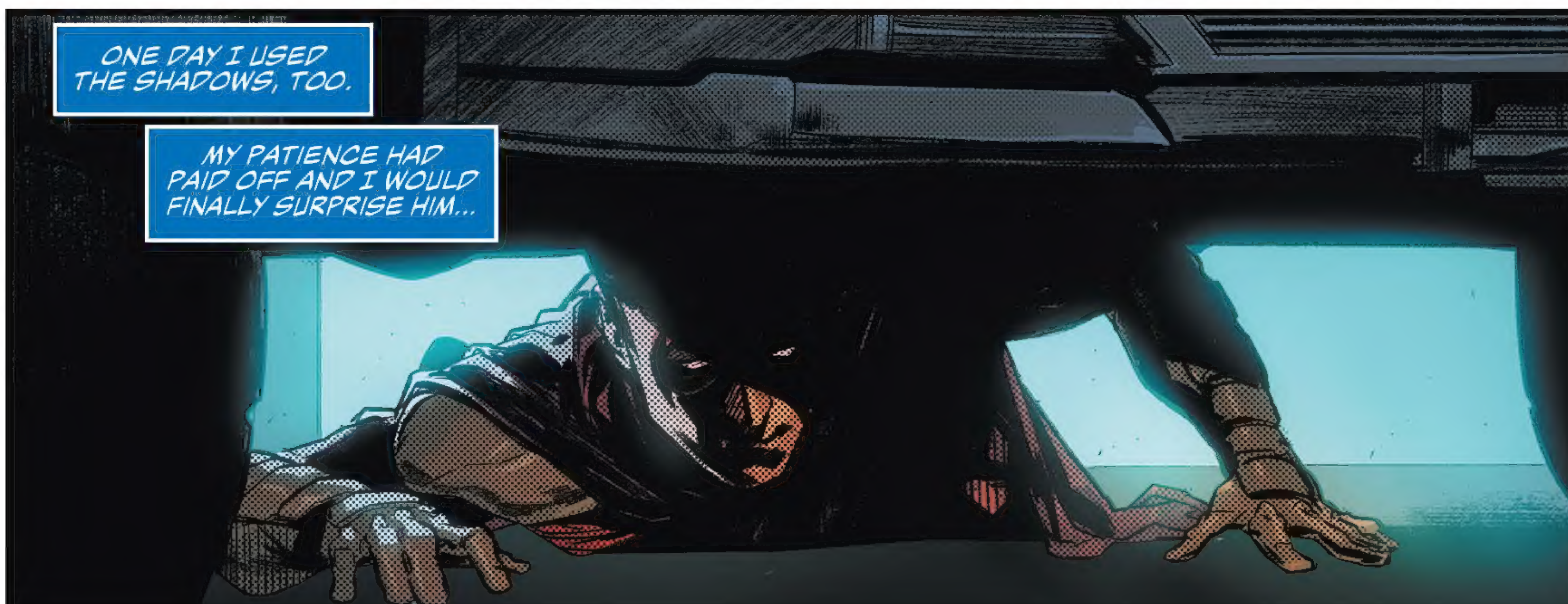


THE GOAL WAS TO
SNEAK UP ON HIM...



...BUT SNEAKING UP ON
BATMAN IS IMPOSSIBLE.

AFTER FAILING MANY TIMES,
I LEARNED TO WATCH AND
WAIT. STUDIED HIM AND HOW
HE USED THE SHADOWS.



ONE DAY I USED
THE SHADOWS, TOO.

MY PATIENCE HAD
PAID OFF AND I WOULD
FINALLY SURPRISE HIM...

...BUT I WAS THE ONE WHO WAS SURPRISED.

IT WAS THE

JUSTICE LEAGUE



I FROZE.

I KNEW BRUCE TEAMED WITH THEM. BUT I HAD NEVER SEEN THEM ALL TOGETHER IN PERSON LIKE THAT IN THE JUSTICE LEAGUE HEADQUARTERS.

I WOULD MEET THEM ALL LATER, OF COURSE, BUT THIS FIRST TIME...

...IT WAS
DIFFERENT.

THEY WERE...

...THE GREATEST
HEROES IN THE
WORLD.

HEROES WHO COULD
DO THE IMPOSSIBLE.

BUT MORE THAN THAT...
THEY WERE A TEAM.

IN THAT MOMENT I
REALIZED SOMETHING
MORE IMPORTANT THAN
SNEAKING AROUND.



ONE DAY...

I'D BE IN THE
JUSTICE LEAGUE.

BUT THAT WAS
BEFORE...

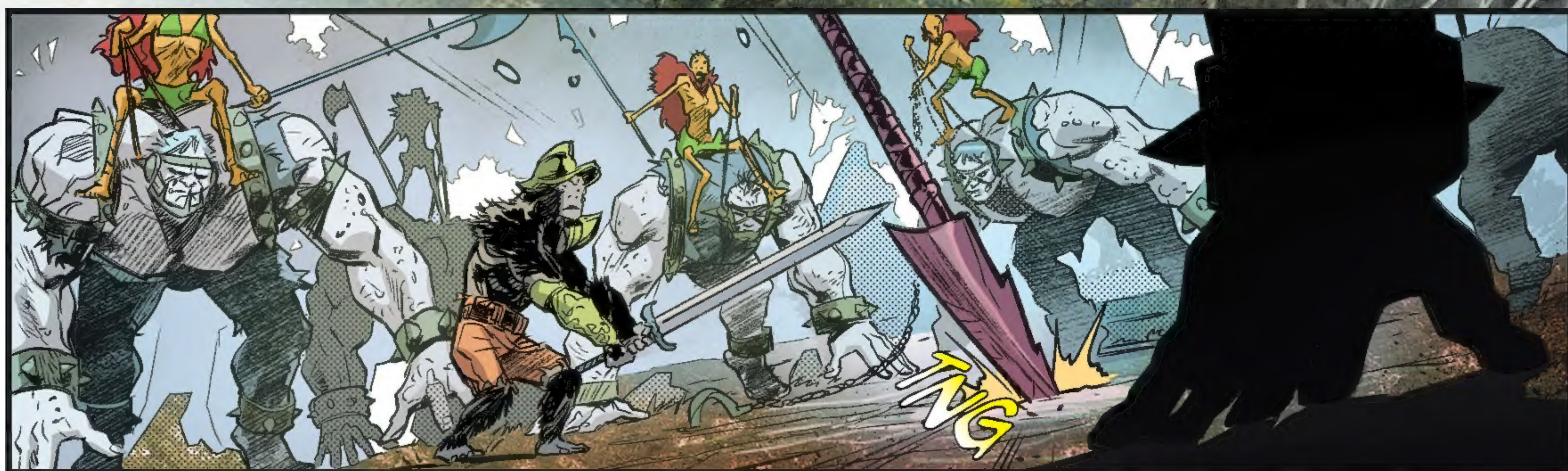
DOOM
METAL

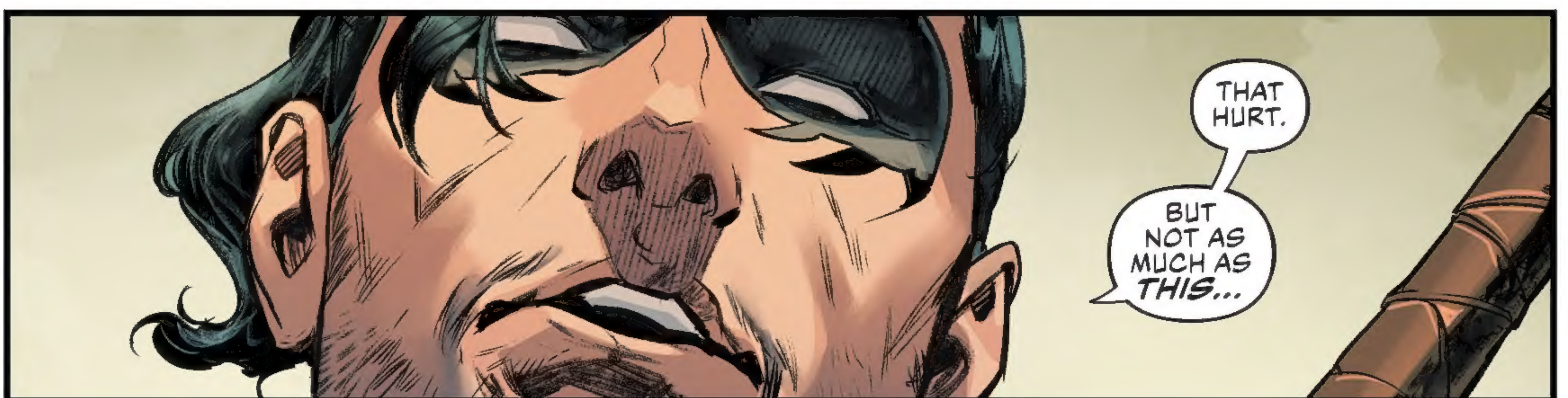
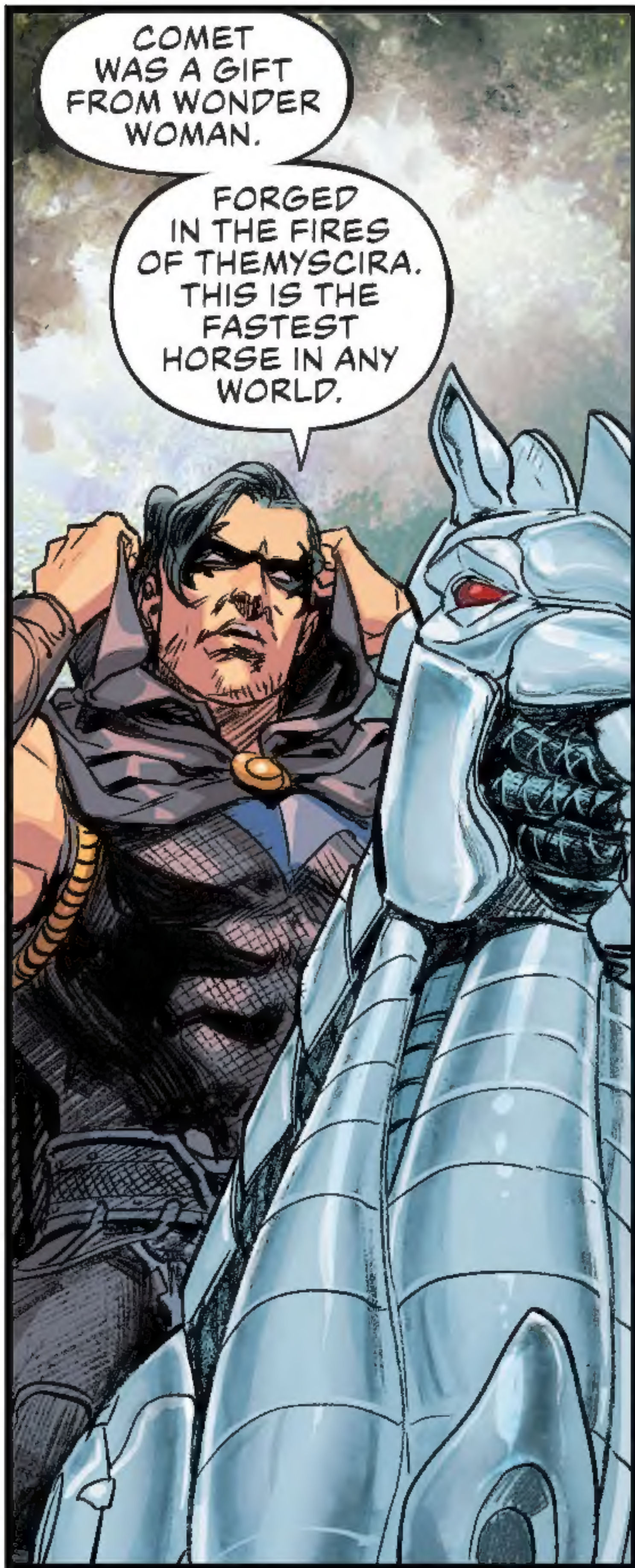
WHOA,
COMET. WHAT
HAS YOU--

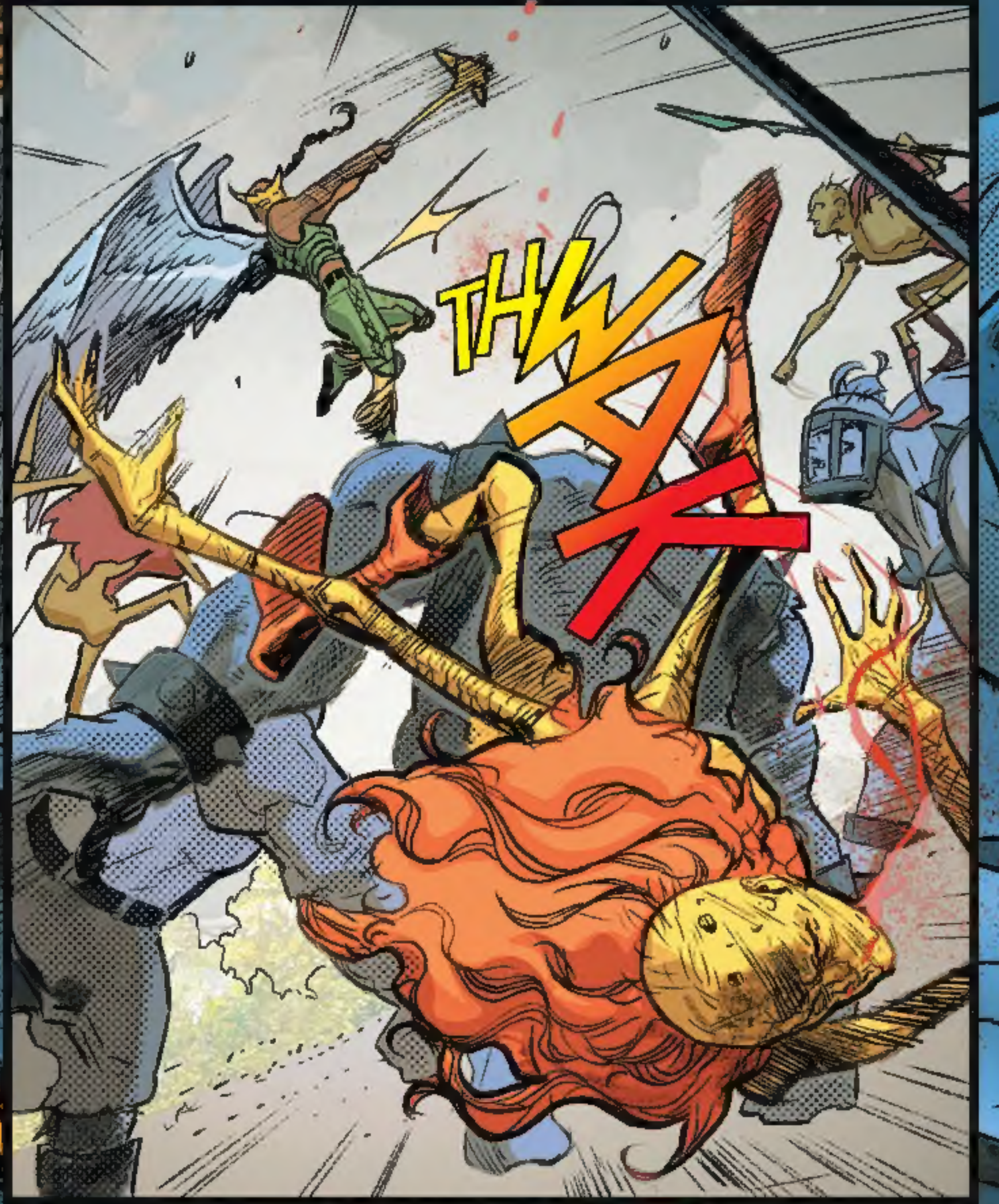
NHCE

GET
BACK, YA
TOSSER!

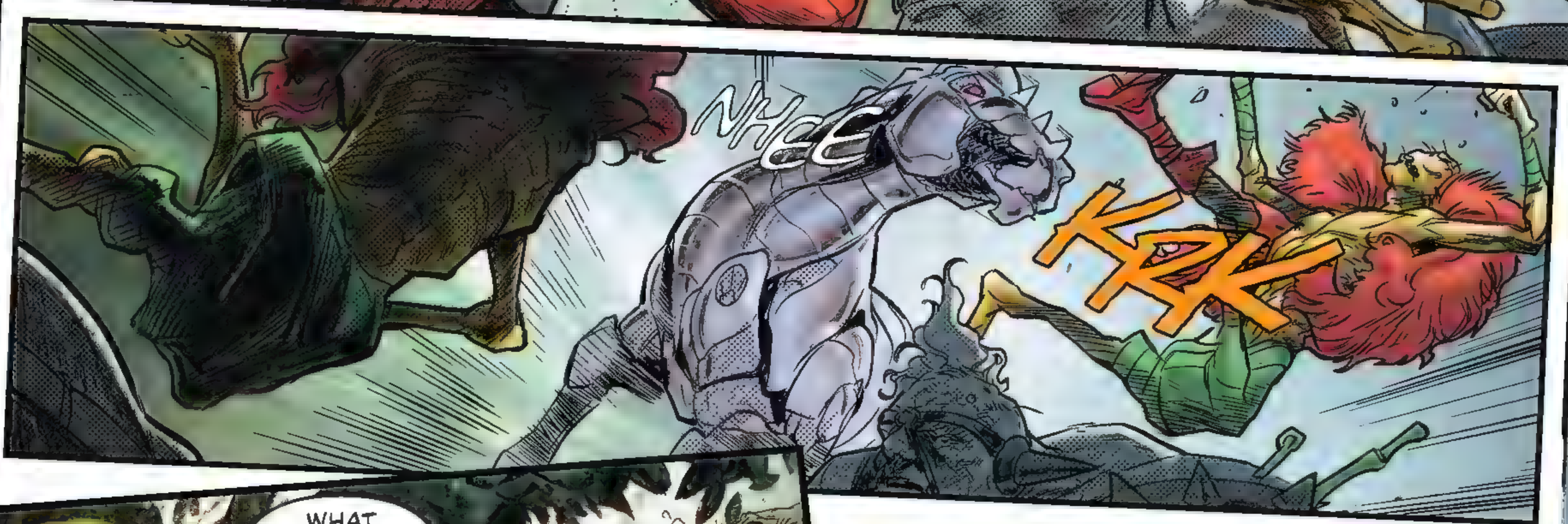
PART ONE
JOSHUA WILLIAMSON WRITER **XERMANICO** ARTIST
ROMULO FAJARDO JR. COLORIST **TOM NAPOLITANO** LETTERER
LIAM SHARP & DAVE STEWART COVER **IAN MACDONALD** VARIANT COVER
ANDREA SHEA ASSOCIATE EDITOR **ALEX R. CARR** EDITOR













WE HEARD WHAT HAPPENED.

TO YOU. TO YOUR TEAM.



THAT WHEN WE WERE GONE YOU KEPT FIGHTING--

THAT FEELS LIKE TWO LIFETIMES AGO.

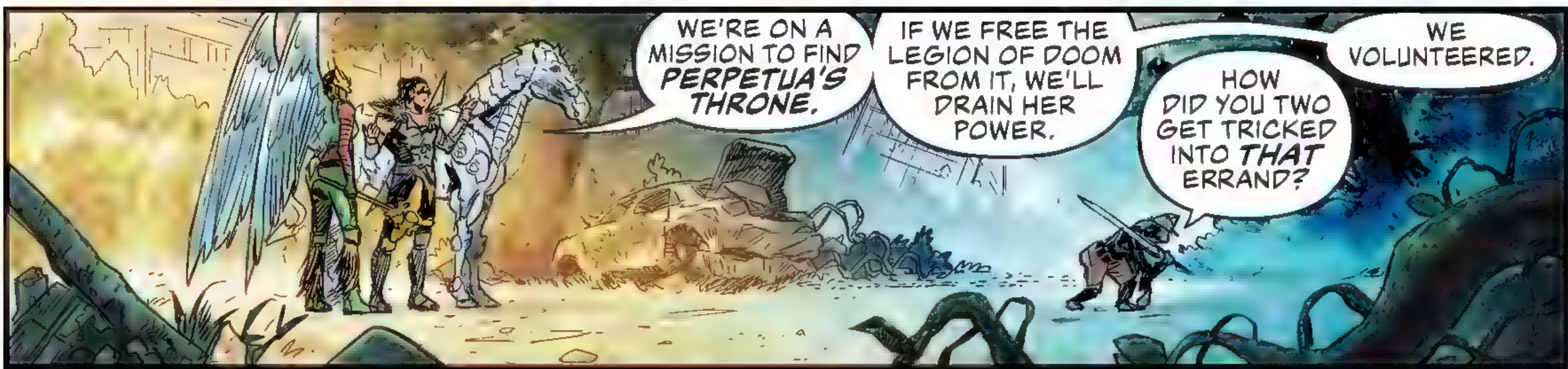
I'M DONE, KIDS. SHOW'S OVER.



THE HEROES ARE RISING UP AGAINST THE BATMAN WHO LAUGHS, CHIMP.

WE WERE TRAPPED ON NEW APOKOLIPS INSIDE THE PRISON IN THE SUN. BUT WONDER WOMAN AND BATMAN FREED SUPERMAN AND THE HEROES THERE.*

*SEE DARK NIGHTS: DEATH METAL #3!

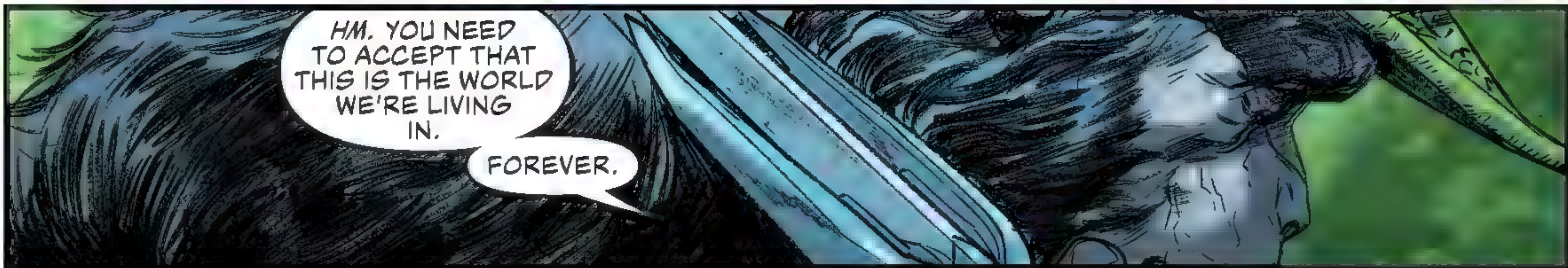


WE'RE ON A MISSION TO FIND PERPETUA'S THRONE.

IF WE FREE THE LEGION OF DOOM FROM IT, WE'LL DRAIN HER POWER.

WE VOLUNTEERED.

HOW DID YOU TWO GET TRICKED INTO THAT ERRAND?



HM. YOU NEED TO ACCEPT THAT THIS IS THE WORLD WE'RE LIVING IN.

FOREVER.



WE NEED ALL THE HELP WE CAN GET IN FINDING THAT THRONE, DETECTIVE CHIMP.

YOU'VE BEEN OUT HERE IN THIS WORLD LONGER THAN US. YOU SEE THINGS WE DON'T.

SO IF YOU WANT TO GO WANDER INTO THE SWAMP AND GIVE UP, FINE.

OR YOU CAN HELP US SOLVE THE GREATEST MISSING PERSONS CASE OF OUR LIVES.



WHAT DO YOU SAY?

~SIGH~

"...FINE. BUT
YOU'RE DRIVING."

...AND WHEN I FINALLY
GET MY MEMORY BACK,
THE WHOLE WORLD
GOES CRAZY.

NOW IT'S
LIKE I'M STILL
STRUGGLING TO
FIND OUT WHO I
AM COMPARED
TO BEFORE,
Y'KNOW?

UH-
HUH...

BUT I WANT
TO GET BACK TO
NIGHTWING. IT'S
WHY I VOLUNTEERED
FOR THE MISSION TO
FREE THE LEGION
OF DOOM.

KID, I DIDN'T
WANT TO HEAR
YOUR LIFE
STORY.

I JUST
ASKED WHY YOU
WERE RIDING
A **ROBOT**
HORSE.

HEY, SLOW
DOWN. WE'RE
CLOSE...

THIS
IS WHERE
YOU WANTED
US TO GO,
CHIMP?



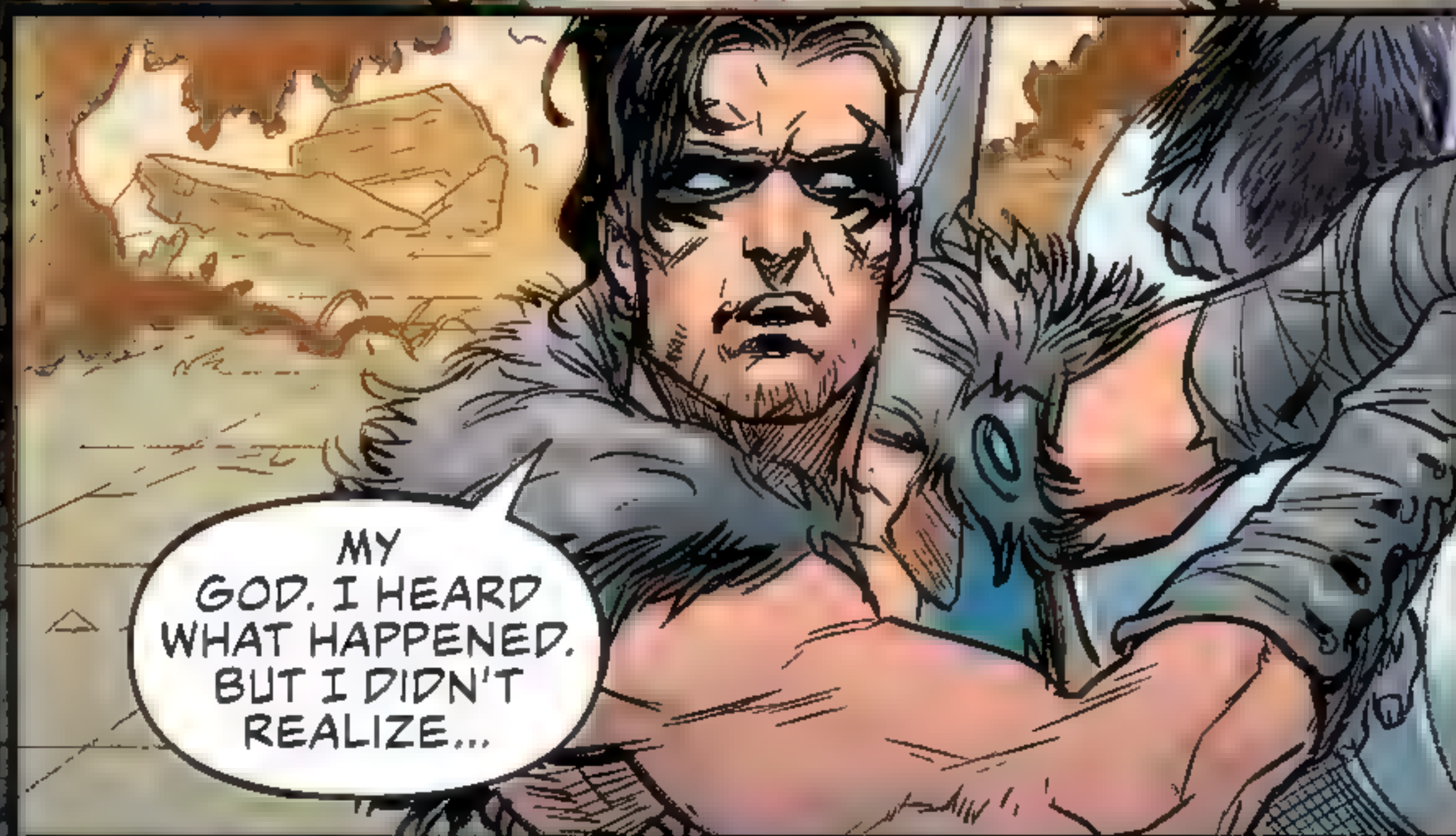
THE
HALL OF
JUSTICE?



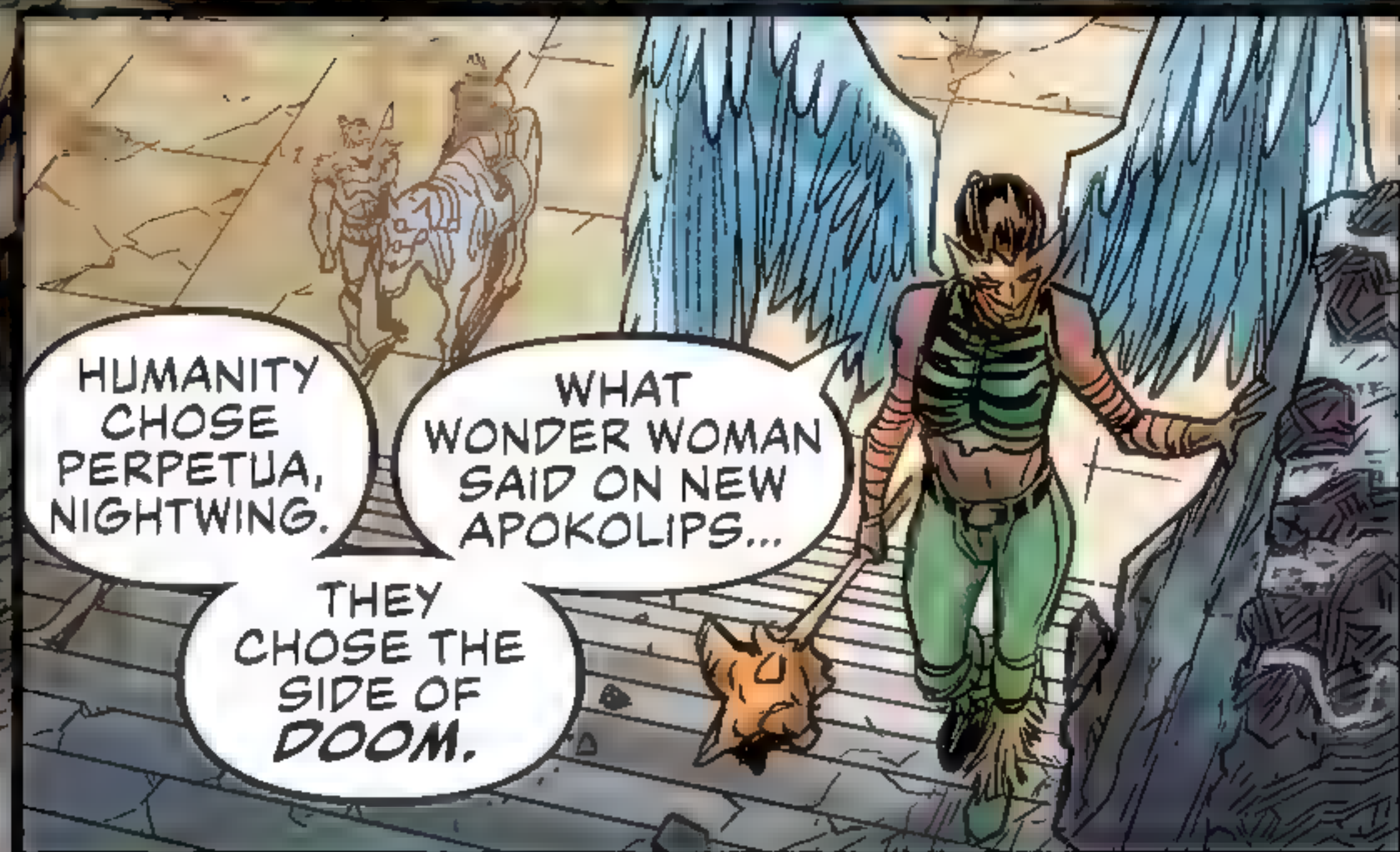
THIS IS WHERE IT CRASHED AFTER
THE JUSTICE LEAGUE LOST.

OUT HERE IN
THE WILD I COULD
TELL I WASN'T ALONE.
THERE WAS **SOMEONE**
ELSE EXPLORING.
STUDYING OUR
NEW NIGHTMARE,
MAPPING IT.

AND THEY
LEFT A TRAIL
BEHIND...



MY
GOD. I HEARD
WHAT HAPPENED.
BUT I DIDN'T
REALIZE...



HUMANITY
CHOSE
PERPETUA,
NIGHTWING.

WHAT
WONDER WOMAN
SAID ON NEW
APOKOLIPS...

THEY
CHOSE THE
SIDE OF
DOOM.



"...IT WAS
SOMETHING WE
ALL NEEDED TO HEAR.
IT ALL COUNTS. THIS
COULD BE OUR LAST
FIGHT, BUT IT ALL
MATTERS."

TODAY,
WE CAN REJECT
OUR FATE. WE CAN
REJECT **DEATH**
ITSELF AND GIVE
THIS UNIVERSE A
SECOND CHANCE.
BUT ONLY IF
WE--



I GET IT. I'M SURE IT
WAS BEAUTIFUL. THE
VOICE OF AN ANGEL.
RAH-RAH.

WHERE
IS **MARTIAN**
MANHUNTER?
WORD AROUND
THE MASKS WAS
YOU TWO WERE
AN ITEM?

HE WAS
WITH US ON
NEW APOKOLIPS
BUT TOOK OFF
WITHOUT...

...I TRUST
J'ONN TO KNOW
WHAT HE'S
DOING.



CHIMP, YOU SAID
THERE WAS SOMEONE
ELSE OUT HERE
WITH YOU? DO YOU
KNOW WHO?

ABOUT
THAT...IF YOU'RE
LOOKING FOR THE
LEGION OF
DOOM...



IT APPEARS WE HAVE A COMMON GOAL, NIGHTWING.

I HAVE THE ANSWERS YOU SEEK.

HAWKGIRL, IT IS...GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN.

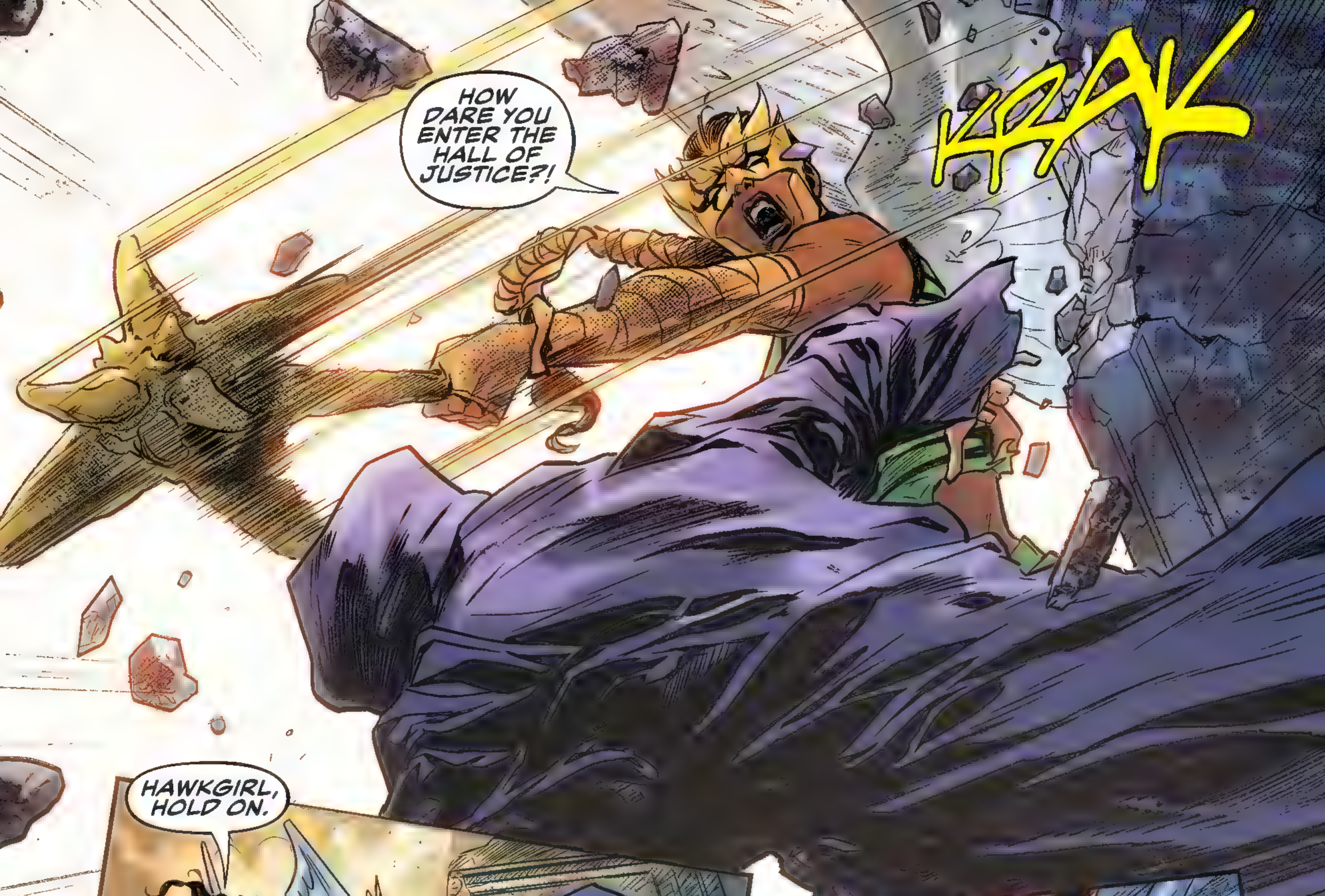


WHAT? ARE YOU CRAZY?

YOU BROUGHT US TO--

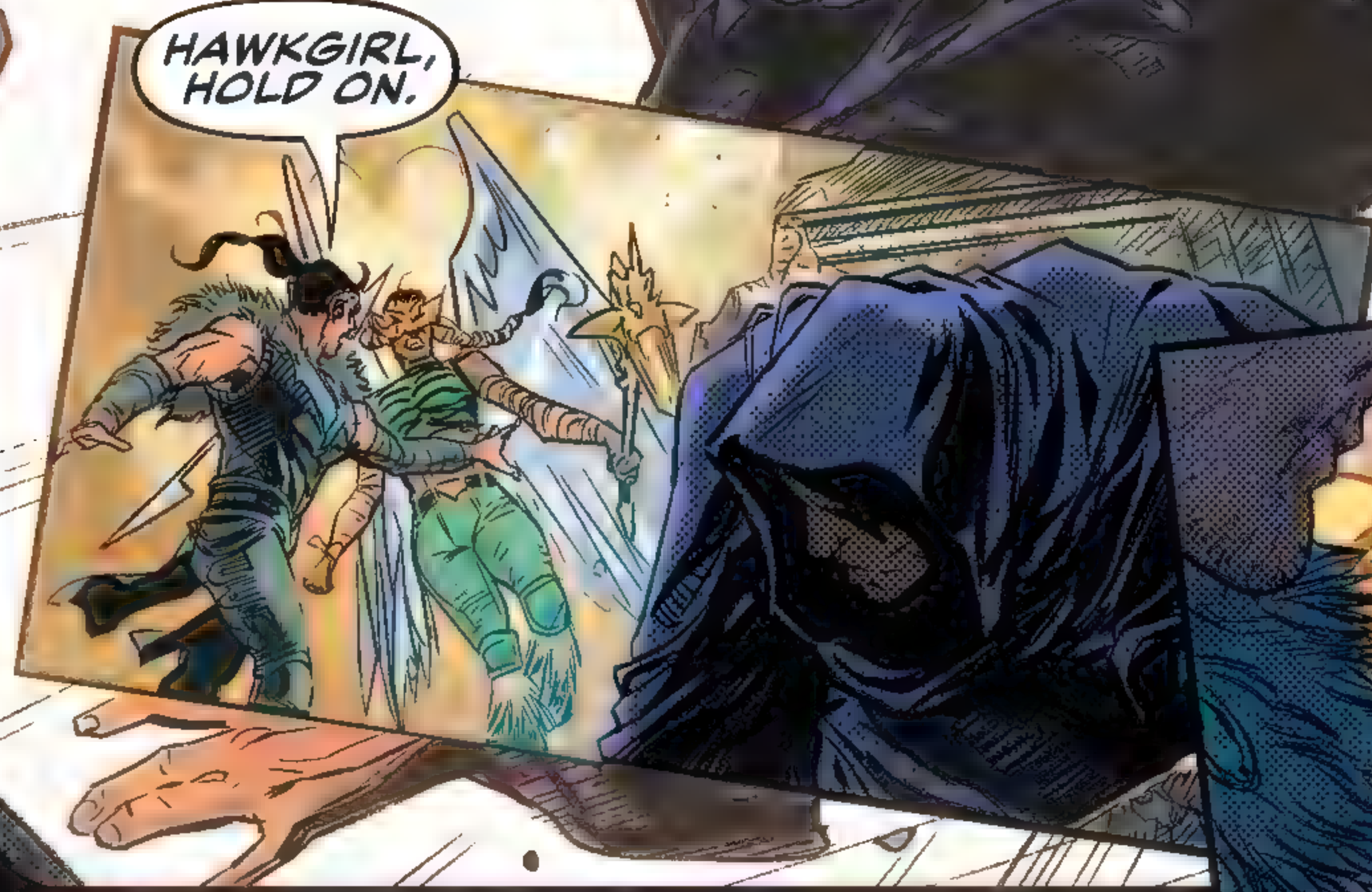


LUTHOR!



HOW DARE YOU ENTER THE HALL OF JUSTICE?!

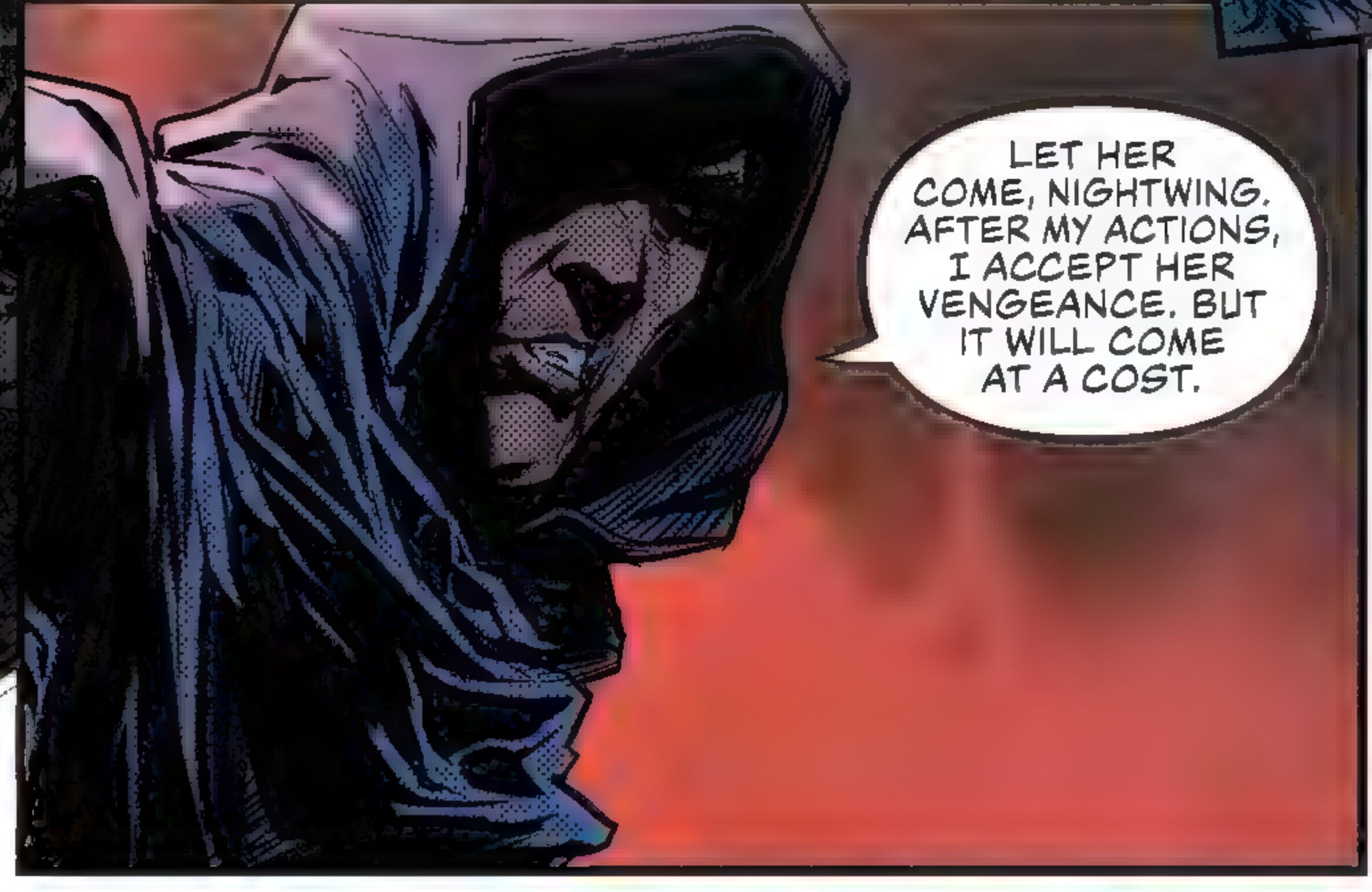
KRAK



HAWKGIRL, HOLD ON.



THIS IS ALL LUTHOR'S FAULT! WE'RE HERE BECAUSE OF HIM!

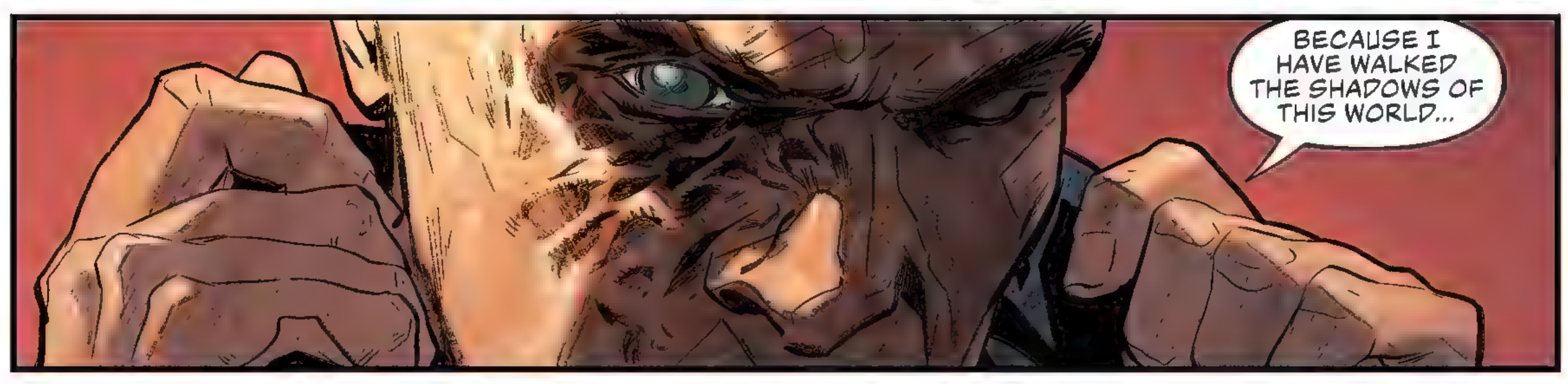


LET HER COME, NIGHTWING. AFTER MY ACTIONS, I ACCEPT HER VENGEANCE. BUT IT WILL COME AT A COST.




WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL US YOU WERE TAKING US TO LUTHOR, CHIMP?!

WHY WOULD WE EVER TRUST HIM?!



BECAUSE I HAVE WALKED THE SHADOWS OF THIS WORLD...

A comic book panel featuring Lex Luthor at the bottom, looking up at the members of the Legion of Doom. The Legion members, including Perpetua, Cheetah, Grodd, and Sinestro, are shown from the chest up, looking down at Lex. The background is dark with blue lightning bolts. Lex is wearing a purple suit and has a determined expression. The Legion members have various expressions, some serious and some smug.

...AND I SEE
NOW THAT IT WAS
MY OWN OBSESSION
WITH THE TOTALITY
THAT STARTED US
DOWN THIS PATH
OF RUIN.

IN MY QUEST
FOR **POWER**, I
CHANGED MYSELF.
MERGED WITH MARTIAN
MANHUNTER AND
BECAME "APEX" LEX.
ALL FOR **HER**.

EVEN AFTER
SHE IMPRISONED THE
LEGION OF DOOM IN HER
THRONE, I STOOD BY HER
SIDE, LONGING FOR THE
FUTURE I WAS
PROMISED.

BUT
PERPETUA
REJECTED ME.
CHOSE THE
BATMAN WHO
LAUGHS.

AFTER I
SURVIVED BEING
CAST DOWN, I
WITNESSED OUR
WORLD
TRANSFORM.

IN MY
STUDIES OF THIS
WORLD REMADE IN THE
BATMAN WHO LAUGHS'
IMAGE, I LEARNED THAT
PERPETUA'S THRONE
WAS STILL POWERED
BY SINESTRO,
CHEETAH, AND
GRODD.

AND THAT
IT WAS HIDDEN ON
EARTH, BUT MOVED
FREQUENTLY TO
AVOID ATTACK. IT
IS CURRENTLY IN
**BRIMSTONE
BAY.**

IF I
AM TO UNDO
THE DAMAGE I
HAVE DONE, I
**MUST FREE
THEM.**

WE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR HIM.

AND NOW WE KNOW THE THRONE IS IN BRIMSTONE BAY.

SEE YA, LUTHOR.

IT DOESN'T MATTER WHERE THE LEGION OF DOOM IS IMPRISONED, NIGHTWING.

A panel showing Nightwing in the foreground, looking determined. Behind him, other heroes like Green Arrow and Robin are visible in a city of ruins. The scene is filled with smoke and debris.

YOU THINK YOU'RE THE FIRST TO TRY TO FREE THEM?

A wide shot of the Hellfire Citadel, a massive, spire-like structure made of dark, jagged rock. It stands in a landscape of fire and lava. Several demonic creatures with horns and red eyes are seen in the foreground, some appearing to be in pain or agony.

ANOTHER HERO VENTURED OUT TO PERPETUA'S THRONE BEFORE YOU...

A close-up of a man's face, likely Luthor, with a serious and somewhat menacing expression. He has short, dark hair and is looking slightly to the side.

AND HE WAS JUST AS UNPREPARED FOR WHAT AWAITED HIM

A panel showing Nightwing falling through a sea of fire and lava. He is in a dark, almost black silhouette, contrasting with the bright orange and red flames. In the background, the Hellfire Citadel is visible under a dark, stormy sky.

YOU CAN FEEL IT IN YOUR WINGS, CAN'T YOU, HAWKGIRL?

THE OMEGA TITANS DIED WHEN THE SOURCE WALL FELL, BUT...

A panel showing a man in a long purple robe, likely a member of the Legion of Doom, standing on a tiled floor. He is looking down at Hawkgirl, who is kneeling or falling. The background shows a city in ruins.

POOF

A large, stylized sound effect 'POOF' in a red, bubbly font. Below it, a massive explosion or impact is shown, with large pieces of rock and debris falling from the sky. The scene is filled with fire and smoke.

PERPETUA RESURRECTED HER FORMER JAILERS' REMAINS FROM THE DARK MULTIVERSE AND CREATED HER OWN FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER.

"THE OMEGA KNIGHT."



"IT KEEPS WATCH OVER THE LEGION OF DOOM. PROTECTS HER SEAT OF POWER WHILE SHE DESTROYS THE MULTIVERSE."

"AND FOR SOME REASON YOUR DEAR MARTIAN MANHUNTER WENT TO CONFRONT IT ON HIS OWN."



IF YOU WISH TO DESTROY PERPETUA'S SEAT OF POWER BEFORE IT MOVES AGAIN, WE MUST GO NOW.

IF J'ONN IS THERE WE NEED TO HELP HIM, BUT I'M NOT WORKING WITH LUTHOR.

I'M TELLING YOU, THIS ALL STINKS.

YOU NEED ME. CAN'T YOU SEE?

"YOUR HONORED JUSTICE LEAGUE MIGHT THINK OF THEMSELVES AS HEROES."

...BUT THEY FAILED AGAINST THE BATMAN WHO LAUGHS.



I GUESS IT'S A GOOD THING WE'RE NOT THE JUSTICE LEAGUE.

EVEN AS THE WORLD ENDS, YOU ARE JUST AS STUBBORN AS YOUR MENTOR.

GO ALONE IF YOU WISH, BUT EVEN IF YOU GET PAST THE OMEGA KNIGHT, THERE IS ANOTHER WITH POWERS WE ALL KNOW TOO WELL.

THE BATMAN WHO LAUGHS SENT ONE OF HIS MOST TERRIFYING DARK KNIGHTS TO ACT AS WARDEN...

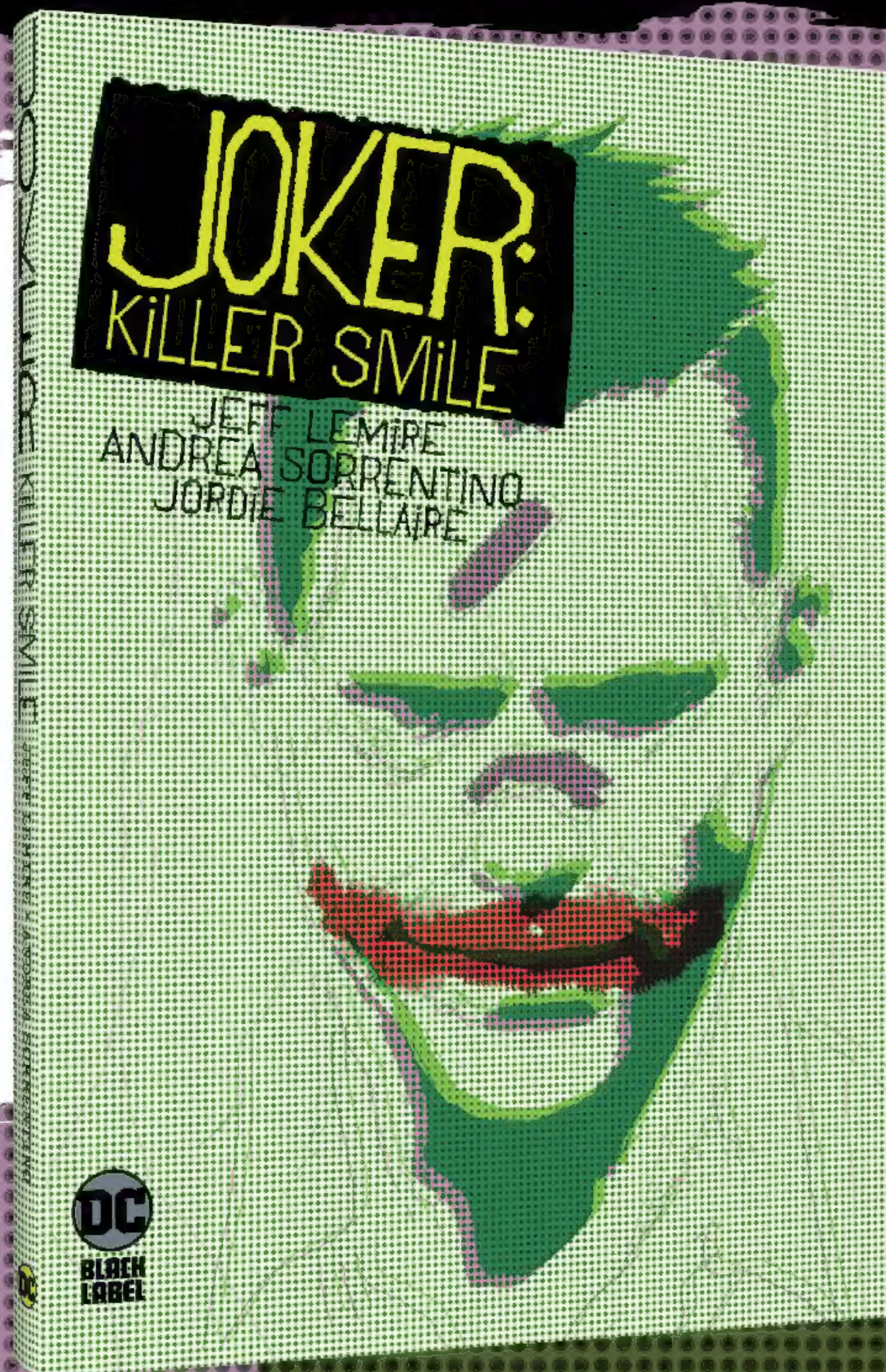


"THE MIND-HUNTER!"



TO BE CONTINUED...

ARKHAM'S GREATEST PSYCHOTHERAPIST
THINKS HE CAN DIAGNOSE THE JOKER.
WHO'S THE CRAZY ONE NOW?



"One of the greatest works
featuring Joker ever made."

—AIPT

JOKER: KILLER SMILE

Story by JEFF LEMIRE

Art by ANDREA SORRENTINO
& JORDIE BELLAIRE



A NEW HARDCOVER COLLECTION
SEPTEMBER





Wonder Woman, Batman, and Superman reunite — as do Scott Snyder and Francis Manapul — to face off against the Dark Multiverse versions of three of their greatest foes: the Anti-Monitor, Superboy-Prime, and Darkseid.

DC NATION

SPOTLIGHT on

DARK NIGHTS

DEATH METAL

TIE-INS

The main *Dark Nights: Death Metal* series is taking a month off, but that doesn't mean the story will slow down a single beat. September brings four tie-ins set across the Metalverse — then Scott Snyder and Greg Capullo return in October for *Dark Nights: Death Metal* #4.



Getting Dr. Manhattan's powers didn't make life easier for Wally West, and now the Darkest Knight is after him — luckily, Wally has backup from the Flash Family, in this one-shot by Joshua Williamson, Eddy Barrows, and Eber Ferreira.



As Perpetua wipes out creation, writer James Tynion IV and artist Juan Gedeon assemble the most bizarre team in existence for one last stand: Owlman, President Superman, Iris West, Captain Carrot, and Guy Gardner.

Prepare for "Doom Metal": Joshua Williamson and Xermanico join forces for a five-part story, as Nightwing seeks to free the Legion of Doom from Perpetua but must enlist the help of... Lex Luthor. Desperate times, indeed.



ON SALE IN SEPTEMBER

DC COMICS BOB HARRAS Senior VP – Editor-in-Chief, DC Comics JIM LEE Publisher & Chief Creative Officer BOBBIE CHASE VP – Global Publishing Initiatives & Digital Strategy DON FALLETTI VP – Manufacturing Operations & Workflow Management LAWRENCE GANEM VP – Talent Services ALISON GILL Senior VP – Manufacturing & Operations HANK KANALZ Senior VP – Publishing Strategy & Support Services DAN MIRON VP – Publishing Operations NICK J. NAPOLITANO VP – Manufacturing Administration & Design NANCY SPEARS VP – Sales JONAH WEILAND VP – Marketing & Creative Services MICHELE R. WELLS VP & Executive Editor, Young Reader

JUSTICE LEAGUE 53. Late November, 2020. Published biweekly by DC Comics, 2900 W. Alameda Avenue, Burbank, CA 91505. GST # is R125921072. Copyright © 2020 DC Comics. All Rights Reserved. All characters featured in this issue, the distinctive likenesses thereof, and related elements are trademarks of DC Comics. The stories, characters, and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. DC Comics does not read or accept unsolicited submissions of ideas, stories, or artwork. For Advertising and Custom Publishing contact dccomicsadvertising@dccomics.com. For details on DC Comics Ratings, visit dccomics.com/go/ratings. DC – a WarnerMedia Company.

The Last Kryptonian-DCP

